



NORTH DAKOTA
DEPARTMENT *of* HEALTH

NEWS RELEASE

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State Health Department Reports 591 Cases of Influenza

BISMARCK, N.D. – The North Dakota Department of Health today announced that 591 cases of influenza have been reported in the state, nearly double the total of 288 reported last week.

“Although the influenza season began relatively slowly this year, the number of flu cases reported to the Department of Health increased significantly the past few weeks,” said Michelle Feist, influenza surveillance coordinator for the Department of Health. “Since the influenza season may very well continue for weeks, it’s important that everyone take precautions to avoid spreading the flu, including getting a flu shot.”

According to the Department of Health, an estimated 10 percent to 20 percent of the population contracts influenza each year, and complications of influenza and pneumonia contribute to the deaths of nearly 400 North Dakotans annually, most of whom are older than 64. However, a large number of influenza cases occur in children younger than 10, many of whom require hospitalization.

To help prevent the spread of influenza, the Department of Health urges everyone to:

- Get a flu shot if you have not had one this season. It’s not too late since the season may last for weeks. Immunization is the best way to prevent influenza.
- Wash hands frequently with soap and water. Hand washing is one of the best ways to prevent all diseases, including influenza.
- Use good respiratory manners. Cover your mouth and nose with a tissue when sneezing or coughing.
- Stay home from work, school or recreational activities when you’re ill. This will help prevent the spread of influenza to your friends, coworkers and family.

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Visit the health department home page at www.ndhealth.gov.

Common signs and symptoms of influenza include abrupt onset of fever, muscle aches, sore throat and cough.

For more information about influenza activity in North Dakota, visit www.ndflu.com.

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